



Board Member Ethics

IC 35-44-1-3 (Conflict of Interest)

Beyond the strict legal definition of how board members should conduct themselves, there are board member ethics. As a board member of a public library, you are a public servant. The public expects that your performance will always be above question and for the public good, not for your own interest or another special interest.

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public servant.”*

Most professional employees are covered by a code of ethics or standards of practice. The following list is a suggested code of ethical conduct your board could adopt for all board members.

As a member of the library board I will:

- listen carefully to the board members who are my teammates.
- respect the opinion of the other board members.
- respect and support the majority decisions of the board.
- recognize that all authority is vested in the board when it meets in legal session and not with individual board members.
- keep well-informed of developments that are relevant to issues that may come before the board.
- participate actively in board meetings and actions.
- call to the attention of the board any issues that I believe will have an adverse effect on the library.
- attempt to interpret the needs of the community to the library and interpret the action of the library to the community.

More...

- refer complaints about the library to the proper level on the chain of command.
- recognize that the board member's job is to ensure that the library is well-managed, not to manage the library.
- vote to hire the best possible person to manage our library.
- represent the whole community to the library and not a particular area or group.
- do my best to ensure that the library is well maintained, financially secure, growing and always operating in the best interests of the community.
- always work to learn more about the board member's job and how to do the job better.
- declare any conflict of interests between my personal life and my position on the library board and avoid voting on issues that appear to be a conflict of interests. Uniform Conflict of Interest, Form 236 State Board of Accounts, <http://www.in.gov/sboa/2416.htm>
See also Chapter 7, http://www.in.gov/sboa/files/lib2010_007.pdf
- abide by the ethics and conflict of interest statements in the board by-laws, as required in 590 IAC 6-1-4(g), <http://www.in.gov/legislative/iac/T05900/A00060.PDF?>

As a member of the library board I will not:

- be critical, in or outside of the board meeting, of fellow board members or their opinions.
- use any part of the library for my personal advantage or the personal advantage of my friends or relatives.
- discuss the confidential proceedings of the board outside the board meeting.

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- promise prior to a meeting how I will vote on any issue in the meeting
- interfere with the duties of the director or undermine the director's authority.